



## Student Visas and U.S. Higher Education

A U.S. Consulate General, Hyderabad Facebook Chat, held on July 6, 2012 from  
02:00pm – 04:00pm

### Facebook Chat Transcript

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**Student:** I had 3 backlogs -- I cleared them all. My percentage after final year B.Tech will be between 62-66%. Can I study MS in good universities in the U.S? If yes, suggest me some according to my percentage and also suggest what score should I get in GRE and TOEFL to get admission in universities?

**US Vice Consul:** Thank you for your question. I encourage you to visit the US India Education Foundation website at [www.usief.org.in](http://www.usief.org.in) for questions regarding school choice and advising.

**Student:** I completed my MCA here in India, Hyderabad, in the year 2011. Now I would like to go to the US for my MS in CS. I was rejected two times at Chennai. My doubt is: can I go for my Masters again to the U.S. If yes, what is the best reason I can give to the Officer when I am asked why I want to pursue my Masters again? As I am going for the third time do I have to change my college just because of change in profile? The Officer who took my interview the last time asked me about why I change my college?

**US Vice Consul:** The best advice that one can give you is to be completely honest. The officer will want a candid answer on why you want a second degree. Be prepared to answer questions regarding any changes you make to your school choice.

**Student:** I have 11 backlogs of which 7 are from the first year. I did not fare well in my exams because I met with an accident (I have proof for this) and the rest of them are not from the stream of subjects that I am well versed with. It was only in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year 1<sup>st</sup> semester that I realized 'how important it is to clear them in the first attempt' and hence from then on I did clear all my exams in first attempt. So, will the number of backlogs be a problem in getting a visa, even though I get admitted into a good rated university?

**US Vice Consul:** Thank you for your question. Although we are unable to comment on the likelihood of a visa approval, it is important to be ready to answer questions on what happened.

**Student:** I attended an F-1 visa extension interview on April 30<sup>th</sup> and my case is undergoing 221g processing. I was given a case number to track the status of my case. When I am trying to track my case in on the website, the status says "We were not able to identify your case #, please enter a valid case number." This is the case status from past 70 days. I have contacted VFS, but no proper answer was obtained. Is this type of case status common or uncommon? If this type of status is uncommon, who do I need to contact and how to proceed in this issue? Please help me out. I have emailed the Consulate but no response was obtained.

**US Vice Consul:** *If your question is in regards to the 221g status: Please understand that all cases are case specific and the best thing you can do is submit everything in a timely manner.*

**Student:** Hello Sir/Ma'am. On my Visa, there are 2 asterisks right below my photograph. What does that mean? I do not find required information on the VFS Website.

**US Vice Consul:** *Thank you for the Independence Day wishes! When we print visas, there are number of different symbols on the visa. Please do not worry. If you have additional questions regarding it, please email HydCEA@state.gov.*

**Student:** Is being approved of an F-1 visa purely of sheer luck?

**US Vice Consul:** *Personally, I do not think luck plays much of a role in the interview process. A well qualified and motivated student should be able to talk about why he/she chose a particular college or university. We understand that some are nervous, but it is important to remember that we want to facilitate legitimate travel and studies in the U.S.*

**Student:** Hi Sir. Is there any chance to reject F-1 visa because of low academic profile even though the applicant shows explains to the officer during their interview, that he/she is genuinely interested to pursue their MS?

**US Vice Consul:** *Thank you for your question. Although we are unable to comment on the likelihood of a visa approval, it is important to remember that we want to make sure students are going to be academically successful in the U.S. education system and be able to remain a student once reaching.*

**Student:** I have a GRE score of 301/340 and TOEFL score of 98/120 but my percentage in my B.Tech is only 60%. I have a lot of backlogs more than 20 and so I would like to know is there any chance of getting a visa if I apply.

**US Vice Consul:** *Thank you for your question. We are unable to comment on the likelihood of a visa approval, but be prepared to talk about your academic record in the interview.*

**Student:** My visa was once rejected due to low academics and low GRE; the visa officer gave me 214(b) refusal. So now I cannot go back and change my UG grades or my count of back logs. Sir please suggest what should I do to improve my chances of visa approval the second time.

**US Vice Consul:** *I know many students have the same concern as you. Although you may not be able to go back and change your undergraduate profile, there are plenty of other ways you might be able to better prepare yourself for studies in the U.S. There are always opportunities to make a change. Just be prepared for the interviewing officer to ask questions regarding your earlier record.*

**Student:** I was rejected thrice for Fall 2011. I went to all 3 interviews with the same profile. Wright state University, Course: Wireless Communications. GRE: 1060 TOEFL: 82 ACADS: 65% 3 backlogs. June 2012 pass out and am planning to retake GRE, get some work experience and apply for Fall 2013. Will my past three visa interviews affect my 4th interview? Is work experience mandatory? I do not want to do a job in software field as I am interested in telecom field. Can I do courses related to telecommunications? Please reply.

**US Vice Consul:** *I am glad you are looking at steps to better your profile. Each interview is treated separately, but we highly discourage applicants from applying again and again without any significant change in their case. To answer your other question- work experience is not mandatory. Lastly, for academic related questions, please consult the US India Education Foundation at [www.usief.org.in](http://www.usief.org.in).*

**Student:** For Fall 2012 almost visa rejections are more for Texas A & M Kingsville University. Sir it is very easy to reject you our visas but we know the pain of it. Please could you tell me the reason why you are rejecting based on the university choice we make?

**US Vice Consul:** *We do not base our decisions on the name of a university. Each case is looked at on a case by case basis. Again, we are highly committed to facilitating legitimate study in the US. However, it is the student's responsibility to express this in an interview.*

**Student:** I have been rejected for my visa on June 05, 2012. I was asked only three questions: my university, my scores and my bachelors aggregate. I was issued a 214(b) which is said to be a potential immigrant! How could you consider me to be a potential immigrant without asking me certain related questions which deals with me being a potential immigrant? At the same time one should be given a chance to explain himself, as the cost of each interview is not a small thing. Well that was my opinion sir, no offence.

**US Vice Consul:** *Thank you for your comment. Please understand that although the interview may look short, the Consular Officer who interviewed you is trained to evaluate all aspects of your case, such as your financial and family situation in India. They also have access to your application that you submitted when applying for an appointment. So although, the interview may appear very short, a lot of information is taken into consideration when a final decision has been made.*

**Student:** I applied for an F-1 visa and my visa got approved around 10 days back for university 'A'. I received another admit from university 'B' after my visa got approved. If I re-apply for a visa on university B's I-20, will my previous visa gets cancelled even before the interview or will it be cancelled only after visa is approved for university 'B'? What happens to my previous visa if the new one is rejected? Is the first visa valid after the second visa appeal is rejected?

**US Vice Consul:** *Great question. This is why we highly encourage students to make sure they have decided on what school they are going to attend before appearing for an interview.*

**Student:** Will my earlier visa gets cancelled if I apply for a new visa?

**US Vice Consul:** *You will need to reapply and schedule an appointment for an interview. You will have to explain to the interviewing Officer your decision. If you indeed are issued again, you will not be able to have two active student visas. The Officer will cancel the original visa you had and you will be reissued a new visas with the correct information. Please remember that each interview is treated on its own. So it is important to be as prepared as the first.*

**Student:** I paid my F-1 SEVIS fee on July 15, 2011. Should I pay a new SEVIS fee to apply for U.S. visa? Basically, I got refused for a U.S. visa on July 19, 2011 for applying to a university that did not match my profile. Later I reapplied on August 10, 2011 by changing my university but was refused again. I have taken a long gap for 1 year and now I am interested in applying again for Fall 2012 with a new university and 3 months of MNC experience but would changing my university create some wrong impression?

**US Vice Consul:** *The SEVIS fee is valid for twelve months from the date of the initial application. If an applicant is initially unsuccessful in obtaining a visa, he/she may apply again for the same or different program within twelve months without having to pay the SEVIS fee again as long as the SEVIS fee payment made meets the fee required for the same or different program.*

**US Vice Consul:** *In regards to your questions about changing your university, you need to be prepared to answer the Consular Officer's questions about why you changing your university choice. Many students believe that if they are rejected and then change the university, they will be issued a visa. This is wrong-again we are basing our decision on the applicant and not the university.*

**Student:** I got an admit into the University of South Florida for my Masters through Graduate Accelerated Pathway. I have a poor profile. Can you please let me know whether I will be granted visa through this Pathway Admit or not?

**US Vice Consul:** I am unable to comment on the likelihood of a visa approval. A number of factors are considered when a decision is made during an interview. My advice is to be well prepared for a variety of questions from the Consular Officer.

**Student:** I got rejected my visa twice [214(b)], the first time was in Hyderabad and the next was in Chennai. The third attempt is on July 20, 2012. I need your suggestions. I have not changed my profile. My profile is GRE: 990; TOEFL: 70; B.Tech: 63.4 (4 backlogs, cleared in very next attempt); University of Northwest Missouri State University.

**US Vice Consul:** I am unable to comment on a specific case. Besides, a number of factors are taken into consideration when a decision is made. However, I can say that reapplying again and again without a significant change in your situation, is unlikely to get you a different result.

**Student:** I got my visa approved but my SEVIS fee is transferred to the university. I had e-mailed SEVP on June 9, 2012 but they replied stating that it will be an update in 2 or 3 business days. There is no mail until date regarding my update of SEVIS fee. It could be a problem for me at the port of entry. What should I do?

**US Vice Consul:** *I am not sure if I completely understand your questions. If they said it would be updated within 2-3 business days and that was on June 9th, I would recommend you contact SEVIS directly to see if any update has been made.*

**Student:** I have got my passport surname blank and filled in my given name. I got my visa issued with my surname n given name as FNU. My I-20 has my full name printed in both the surname and given name fields. I would like to know if there would be a problem during my immigration check. Should I get the I-20 changed or can I proceed in the same way and explain my situation to them.

**US Vice Consul:** *Your visa should be printed exactly as your name is listed in your passport. If it is not, please email HydCEA@state.gov with explanation of your situation. If the situation is simply that your I-20 has it listed as you explained, this should not be a problem. Again your visa and passport information should match exactly.*

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